

discounted. The site is some 20 miles from Bristol and Avonmouth docks — one possibility for its origin. However, this may represent a native population although no further specimens have been encountered.

### Acknowledgements

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### References

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A FEW REMARKS ON *ATHOUS SUBFUSCUS* MÜLL. (COL.: ELATERIDAE) IN SURREY. — Mr. D. A. Prance's capture of a specimen of this beetle at Leith Hill (*antea*: 90), along with the two others in Surrey he mentions, is indeed of great interest. He refers to the difficulty of accounting for the sudden appearance of a purely North Scottish species in the county, otherwise than by introduction with plants, and adduces the case of *Nudobius lentus* Grav. as a possible parallel.

There are a number of instances of the latter kind; in fact they have been occurring at irregular intervals from about the beginning of the century right up to the last year or two, the earliest clear one being that of the Cerambycid *Asemum striatum* L. It is hard to form any wholly satisfactory theory to cover all such cases, but a natural spread from north to south has never been established in any of them, and indeed the facts run counter to such a notion.

The present one, however, differs from all these in that the species has never been found on the Scottish mainland, but only on the almost treeless islands of Orkney and Shetland — the extreme north of the Britannic area. Yet on the Continent *A. subfuscus* is a widespread and common woodland insect, not specially boreal. It is thus one of the major zoogeographical problems in the British fauna. In this case natural spread to southern England may surely be ruled out at once; nor can the species well have been there from early times, yet never seen until now. There remains only immigration from abroad and chance introduction, of which the second seems the more likely. — A. A. ALLEN.